



JAW DROPPING

Stress levels, sleep disturbances, changing work patterns proving to be real pain in the jaw for many in city

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DARK WATERS

Mysterious death of elephant in Magguru forest points to grim possibility — waters of Arkavathi so toxic that it is killing wildlife

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Urban activists say repeated discount schemes since 2023 in traffic fines has only emboldened violators as records show despite such leeway, around ₹2,827 crore is still due in penalties

ROAD TO HELL PAVED BY GOOD DISCOUNT OFFERS

Since 2023, K'taka govt has introduced 4 such offers

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The Karnataka government's recurring decision to offer a 50% discount on pending traffic fines may provide temporary relief to motorists and help traffic police recover long-pending dues, but road safety experts argue that the practice is steadily weakening the deterrent effect of traffic penalties.

Traffic fines are designed to discourage violations and promote responsible road behaviour. However, frequent discount schemes since 2023 have created a perception among many motorists that penalties are negotiable rather than mandatory. Instead of paying fines promptly, a growing number of violators now choose to delay settlement, anticipating that another discount window will eventually be announced.

Traffic expert Prof. MN Shreehari said the government's decision to offer a 50% discount on traffic challans sends the wrong message. He said that instead of strictly collecting fines from violators, the government is giving violators concessions. According to him, traffic laws are meant to punish those who break the rules, not reward them with discounts. "If violators are repeatedly given concessions, the purpose of



“If violators are repeatedly given concessions, the purpose of special enforcement drives and fines issued through AI-enabled traffic cameras becomes meaningless

—Prof MN Shreehari, traffic expert

—Prof MN Shreehari, traffic expert

special enforcement drives and fines issued through AI-enabled traffic cameras becomes meaningless. It sends a message that penalties can eventually be

reduced, weakening the impact of enforcement, which are intended to discourage dangerous driving and improve road safety," he said.

So far, the Karnataka government has introduced four such discount offers. The first was announced in 2023.

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Dearer & dearer

₹89 hike in LPG cylinder prices in just 3 months sparks outrage, households feel the heat



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The latest increase of ₹29 in domestic LPG cylinder prices has triggered fresh outrage among consumers, with many alleging that the Centre is imposing an unbearable burden on middle-class families, the poor and homemakers already struggling with rising living costs.

The latest revision comes barely three months after a ₹60 hike in March, taking the cumulative increase in cooking gas prices to '89 within a single quarter.

The steep rise has hit household budgets at a time when families are already grappling with soaring prices of groceries, vegetables, milk and other essentials. For millions of homemakers, the kitchen has become the latest battleground against inflation.

"Every month we are forced to cut down on something. School fees, groceries, electricity bills and now gas cylinders are becoming more expensive. Running a household is becoming impossible," said Sunitha Rao, a homemaker from Bengaluru. Another homemaker, Shobha Patil from Belagavi, echoed similar concerns.

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THINGS TO DO
01 Culture in craft

Indian Artisans Bazaar, organised by Grand Flea Market, brings together talented artisans and entrepreneurs showcasing unique handmade products, traditional crafts, ethnic wear, home décor items, jewellery and lifestyle products. 📍Where: Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath; 🕒When: Until June 14

**02 Wild horizons**

Career Compass, in association with Laughing Elephants, presents an unforgettable outdoor summer camp amidst the tranquil Sharavati backwaters near Jog Falls. Designed for children and teenagers aged 10 to 18, the camp offers opportunities to explore nature and build new skills. Those interested can contact for registration: +91 98450 47991. 🕒When: June 11 to 25

03 Comic timing

'Main Shayar Toh Nahi' is Manhar Seth's heart-touching and hilarious blend of comedy and poetry that takes the audience on an unforgettable journey through love, heartbreak, nostalgia and self-discovery.

📍Where: The Comedy Theatre; Indiranagar
 🕒When: June 9, 8 pm

**04 Pet project**

Pet Circle is a vibrant two-day celebration bringing interactive experiences, shopping, entertainment, community moments and leading pet brands under one roof for pet parents and their furry companions. 📍Where: Nexus Vega City Mall; 🕒When: June 20, 21, 10.30 am

05 Mythological reimagining

Shurpanakhi, an experimental theatre production weaves together Odissi dance, theatre and Yakshagana to reimagine Shurpanakhi not as a demoness, but as a woman, exploring her story through movement and emotions. 📍Where: Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar; 🕒When: June 21, 3.30 pm, 7.30 pm



Work's becoming a real pain in the jaw

Stress, poor sleep and work pressure drives up cases of jaw-related issues, with many unknowingly clenching their jaws, causing prolonged strain on muscles and joints

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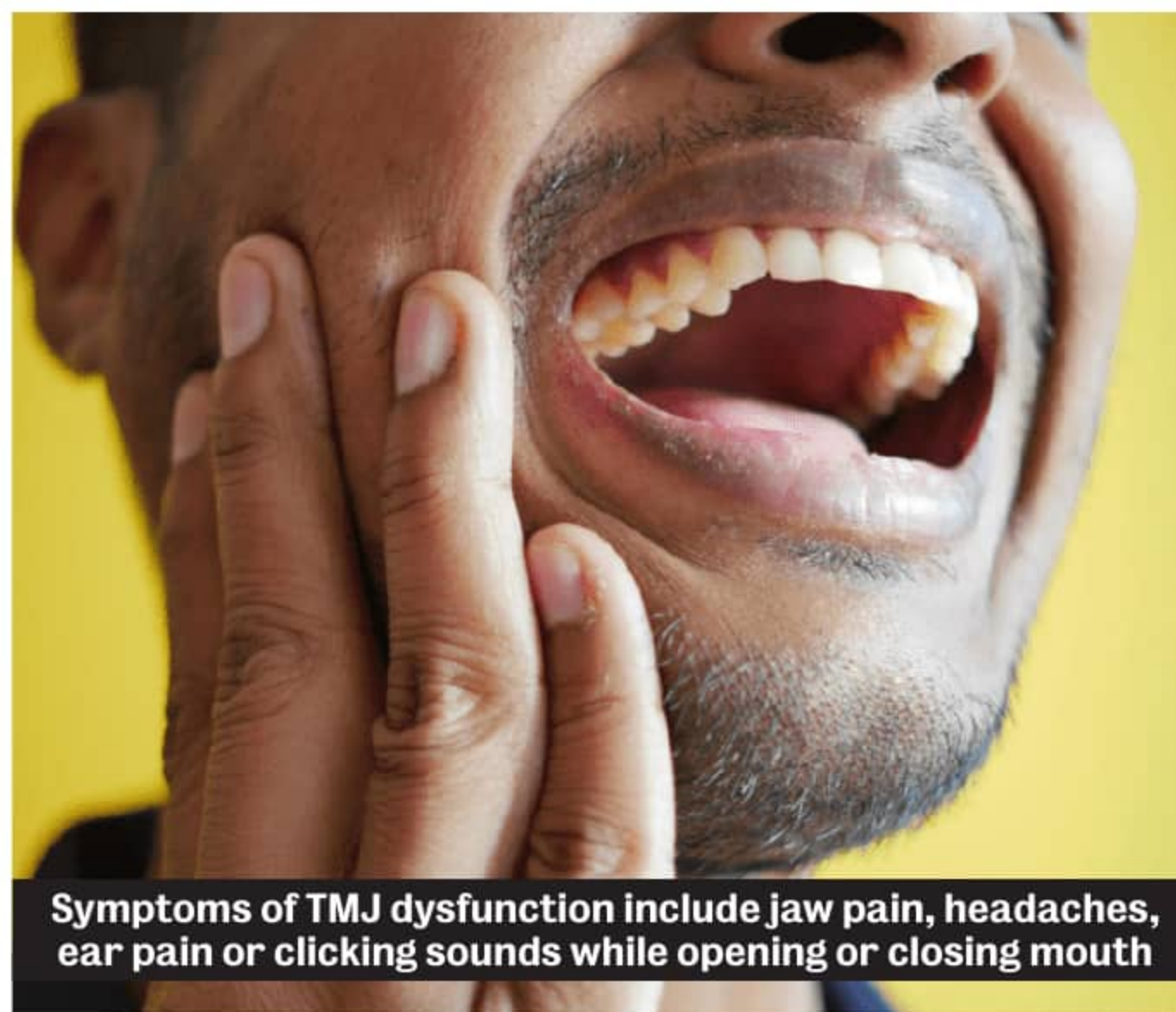
Dental experts are reporting a sharp increase in cases of Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ) dysfunction, a condition affecting the jaw joint and surrounding muscles, with rising stress levels, sleep disturbances and changing work patterns emerging as major contributing factors.

According to Dr Achuth M Baliga, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon and Medical Director, Dental Services at Happiest Pearls, the condition has become increasingly common, particularly among younger patients.

"We are seeing a notable rise in Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ) dysfunction, particularly among women aged 14-40 years. In our practice, we encounter around two such cases every week, and the incidence has increased by nearly 200 per cent since the COVID-19 pandemic," he said.

Dr Baliga attributed the trend to mounting stress from academic pressures, competitive examinations and demanding workplaces. He said TMJ dysfunction is often driven by unconscious teeth clenching and grinding, known as bruxism, which places excessive strain on the jaw joint and chewing muscles.

Dentists say the disorder can be difficult to identify because its symptoms often mimic those of other medical conditions.



Symptoms of TMJ dysfunction include jaw pain, headaches, ear pain or clicking sounds while opening or closing mouth

Patients commonly report jaw pain, headaches, facial soreness, ear pain, difficulty chewing and clicking sounds while opening or closing the mouth.

Dr Srividya Rao Vasista, Chief Dental Surgeon at Fortis Hospitals, Yeshwanthpur, described TMJ dysfunction as the "great imitator" because its symptoms overlap with a range of ailments.

"The jaw joint sits in a very crowded neighbourhood. It's close to the ears, teeth, facial muscles, temples and sinuses. Pain from one area can easily be felt in another, making TMJ disorders surprisingly tricky to identify," said Dr Vasista.

According to Dr Baliga, patients frequently experience a wider range of symptoms, including sleep disturbances, fatigue, brain fog, palpitations and

even digestive discomfort. Because of the overlap with other conditions, some patients undergo unnecessary dental procedures before receiving the correct diagnosis.

"TMJ disorders are often mistaken for migraines, sinus issues or dental problems, and in some cases patients have undergone unnecessary wisdom tooth extractions before receiving the correct diagnosis," he said.

Experts say stress has a direct impact on jaw health. Many people unknowingly clench their jaws while working, driving, studying or sleeping, causing prolonged strain on muscles and joints. "Many people carry stress on their shoulders. Others carry it in their jaws. The body always finds a way to speak when the mind is under pres-

sure," Dr Vasista said. She added that students preparing for competitive examinations, IT professionals, healthcare workers, entrepreneurs and shift workers appear particularly vulnerable to the condition. The COVID-19 pandemic appears to have accelerated the problem. Dentists point to heightened anxiety, increased screen time, poor posture while working from home and disrupted sleep schedules as key factors behind the rise in cases.

Experts say jaw disorder can be difficult to identify because its symptoms often mimic those of other medical conditions

"Many patients are surprised when I tell them their jaw pain isn't really a jaw problem—it's a stress and sleep problem that's showing up in the jaw," Dr Vasista noted. Diagnosis typically involves a detailed clinical examination, assessment of jaw movement, evaluation of the patient's bite and, when necessary, imaging studies. Dentists also look for signs of chronic teeth grinding such as flattened teeth, fractured fillings, cheek-biting marks and enlarged jaw muscles. If left untreated, experts warn, TMJ dysfunction can lead to chronic pain, restricted jaw movement, excessive tooth wear, cracked teeth and a significant decline in quality of life.

Pink Line elevated stretch to open by August 15?

The much-awaited Pink Line elevated corridor between Kalena Agrahara and Tavarekere is likely to open for commercial operations around August 15, according to BMRLCL sources. The 7.5-km elevated stretch includes six stations, one will provide an interchange with the Yellow Line near Jayadeva Hospital. The new section has already received speed certification from the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO), which has cleared train operations at speeds of up to 90 kmph without any restric-

tions. BMRLCL now expects to seek inspection approval from the Commissioner of Metro Rail Safety (CMRS), inspections are likely later this month. A BMRLCL official said, "Once all statutory approvals, including independent safety assessments for signalling and train control systems, are completed by the end of July, passenger services are expected to commence in mid-August. The addition of the Pink Line elevated section will expand Namma Metro's network to 103.6 km, helping Bengaluru regain its position as the city with India's second-largest metro network after Delhi, overtaking Mumbai Metro, which currently has a network length of 101.43 km." — BMB

Karnataka's young minds scale UPSC heights

Aspiring candidates for the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) examinations must begin rigorous preparation from Class 10 itself to achieve their goal of joining the civil services, said Dr GN Srikantaiah, retired IFS officer and noted educationist. Speaking at a felicitation programme organised by Chunchashree Balaga at Adichunchanagiri Community Hall, Vijayanagara, to honour successful UPSC rank holders from Karnataka, Srikantaiah highlighted that nearly 20 students from the state secured ranks in the recently concluded examination. "Our target is to ensure around 100 students from Karnataka get ranks in the UPSC examinations. There are around 50 coaching centres in Bengaluru. We want to hold a meeting with the management of coaching centres to discuss the measures to be taken to have more and more students preparing for the UPSC examinations by creating awareness on the facili-

ties available for them," Srikantaiah said.

He opined that awareness among students is one of the main reasons for their success in the UPSC examinations. "Students from Kolar district, especially from agricultural families, are aware of the difficulties their parents are facing. These students have the hunger and willpower to succeed in the UPSC examinations. It is encouraging to see more students from Yadgir district cracking the examinations. It is because of the awareness among the students," he said. Speaking with BM, Sagar Ashwathappa, from Nenumanahalli in Kolar district, explained that he is from an agricultural family. "My father is a farmer and mother is a homemaker. I studied at a government high school and government PU college. It is my sixth attempt to crack the UPSC examination. I had nourished an ambition of becoming an officer while in high school. Now, I got the rank in IRS-IT," said Ashwathappa.



Anoop Reddy A, who hails from Kolar, secured 6th rank and an entry into the IFS. "I am confident of getting posted in Karnataka. I want to create awareness among farmers on how to earn money through urban forestry," said Reddy.

Sri Nirmalanandanatha Swamiji of Adichunchanagiri Math appreciated the candidates who cracked the UPSC examinations. "The students who fail in the UPSC examinations should not get disappointed. They should consider failure as the stepping stone for success. The students who got selected must not use their position for personal benefit. They should work for the welfare of the downtrodden in society," he said.

— Y Maheswara Reddy

'Civic authorities can't force landowner out of pvt property for infra project'

The High Court has ruled that civic authorities cannot compel a landowner to part with private property without compensation merely because the land is required for a public infrastructure project. The court held that any acquisition of private land must follow legally prescribed procedures and provide compensation or other lawful benefits such as Transferable Development Rights (TDR), where applicable.

Justice Suraj Govindaraj delivered the ruling while allowing a petition filed by a Bengaluru resident who chal-

lenged a condition imposed by municipal authorities for the release of an approved building plan. The petitioner owned land in Thalaghattapura on Kanakapura Road and had entered into a joint development arrangement for construction of an apartment project. Although the modified building plan had already been sanctioned, authorities later insisted that he relinquish a portion of his land free of cost for a proposed road-widening project before the approved documents would be released.

The landowner argued that such a demand lacked legal backing and vio-

lated constitutional protections over private property. He contended that public authorities cannot require citizens to surrender land without following acquisition laws.

HIGH COURT

Defending its action, the municipal body maintained that the road expansion would benefit the property owner by improving access and infrastructure in the area. However, the court rejected this argument, observing that any incidental benefit arising from a public project cannot be used

as a substitute for compensation. The judge noted that an increase in property value resulting from infrastructure improvements may be considered while calculating compensation, but it cannot justify taking land without paying for it.

The court further observed that the building plan had already been approved before the demand for land surrender was made. Imposing a new condition at the stage of releasing the sanctioned documents, without any statutory authority, was arbitrary and amounted to depriving the owner of property without due process of law.

Justice Govindaraj also clarified that land identified in the city's master plan for future road widening does not automatically become government property.

Accordingly, the High Court directed the authorities to release the approved building plan and related construction drawings within 30 days without insisting on the execution of a relinquishment deed.

At the same time, it left open the option for the government to acquire the land in the future, provided it follows the law and compensates the owner appropriately. **BMB**

Dangerous design, speeding vehicles prove lethal mix on flyover



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A recent fatal accident on the Nandini Layout Fourth Block flyover near Jai Bhuvaneshwari Nagar on Outer Ring Road has once again brought attention to long-standing safety concerns raised by local residents. Citizens are urging authorities to install a road divider on the flyover to curb speeding and prevent further loss of life.

Residents pointed out that the flyover, which connects several densely populated neighbourhoods including Lakshmi Devi Nagar, Vidhana Soudha Layout, Laggere, Preethi Nagar and surrounding areas, was constructed by the Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA). Work on the project began in 2016, and the flyover was opened to the public in August 2018.

According to residents, accidents involving two-wheelers, auto-rickshaws, cars and cabs have been occurring frequently on the stretch ever since it became operational.

The latest tragedy occurred on Tuesday when a 24-year-old man reportedly suffered fatal injuries in a two-wheeler accident on the flyover and died at the spot.

Residents claim that the design of the flyover, combined with high vehicle speeds, has made the stretch particularly dangerous. They point out that

traffic volume is especially heavy during peak hours, between 5.30 pm and 8.30 pm and from 8 am to 10.30 am, increasing the risk of collisions.

The flyover falls under the jurisdiction of the Rajajinagar Traffic Police Station and the North Division Traffic Deputy Commissioner of Police. Local citizens have now appealed to the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), West City Corporation officials and the Traffic Enforcement Cell to take immediate corrective measures.

Santosh Kumar, a local resident, who has submitted a representation to authorities, said that the installation of a divider is urgently needed to regulate vehicle movement and reduce speeding.

"Since the flyover was opened in 2018, accidents involving bikes, autos, cars and cabs have occurred repeatedly. The recent death of a young rider is deeply concerning. During peak hours, traffic congestion is high and many vehicles travel at unsafe speeds. Authorities must immediately install a divider on the flyover to improve safety and prevent further accidents," he said.

Residents said that a central divider would help channel traffic more effectively, discourage reckless overtaking and significantly reduce the likelihood of head-on collisions. They have urged civic and traffic authorities to act promptly before more lives are lost on the accident-prone stretch.



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Going with the flow: BIAL's big water win

Making waves beyond the runway, Bengaluru Airport is banking every drop through harvesting, recycling and recharge initiatives that keep sustainability flying high

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As concerns over water scarcity continue to grow, Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru has emerged as a model for sustainable water stewardship, replenishing more than twice the amount of water it consumes and adopting a range of innovative measures to reduce its dependence on freshwater resources.

According to the airport's Sustainability Report 2024-25, the facility achieved a water positivity index of 2.36 during the financial year, meaning it replenished more than twice the water withdrawn for its operations. This has been achieved through a combination of rainwater harvesting, wastewater recycling, groundwater recharge initiatives and climate-smart irrigation systems.

The airport has developed an integrated water management network designed to capture, store, treat and reuse water while minimising environmental impact. There are 315 groundwater recharge pits and several recharge and retention ponds that harvest rainwater and channel it into the ground. The airport's stormwater drainage network is also designed to direct runoff into nearby lakes and wetlands, supporting local ecosystems and biodiversity.

In FY 2024-25, wastewater treatment totalled 1,168 million litres, while the quantity of treated water recycled was recorded at 1,130 million litres. Harvested rainwater accounted for nearly 770 million litres, while the remainder came



Smart irrigation, aircraft-cleaning technology and zero-discharge systems drive efficiency, while recharge pits, wetlands and biotopes strengthen ecological resilience

from third-party potable and non-potable supplies. The extensive use of harvested rainwater has helped reduce dependence on external water sources.

The airport has also adopted advanced technologies to reduce water consumption across its operations. One such initiative is the use of water-efficient Aerowash units for cleaning aircraft exteriors. The automated system uses a biodegradable, plant-based cleaning solution and significantly reduces water use compared with conventional washing methods. The dry-wash technology reportedly lowers water consumption by as much as 99 per cent while

eliminating the need for wastewater processing.

Beyond conservation, the airport is focusing on improving water quality through nature-based solutions. Biotopes and rain gardens have been established around water-harvesting ponds using carefully selected plant species that naturally absorb pollutants such as nitrogen and phosphorus from stormwater. These systems help improve the quality of water retained and recharged within the airport premises.

A spokesperson for Bengaluru International Airport Limited (BIAL) said, "Our Sustainability Vision is to touch lives by nurturing a sustain-

able future through initiatives that drive economic, social and environmental transformation. We aim to achieve water stewardship through initiatives that are socially equitable, environmentally sustainable and economically beneficial.

"BIAL is the first airport in the country to achieve water positivity with an index of 2.36, meaning the airport replenishes more than twice the water it consumes. This achievement has been made possible through extensive rainwater harvesting, wastewater recycling and smart water management technologies. We recover two-thirds of our potable water requirement through our in-house rainwater harvesting systems."

The airport's sustainability programme has incorporated a Zero Liquid Discharge system, wherein no wastewater generated within the airport is released beyond its boundaries. Instead, wastewater is treated and reused through advanced treatment infrastructure. BIAL is also the first Indian airport to implement a weather-based smart irrigation system for managing the 100-acre landscape in and around the terminal.

"The airport's landscaping and afforestation efforts support groundwater recharge and soil conservation. IoT-based smart irrigation systems use real-time weather and soil data to reduce water consumption," the spokesperson said.

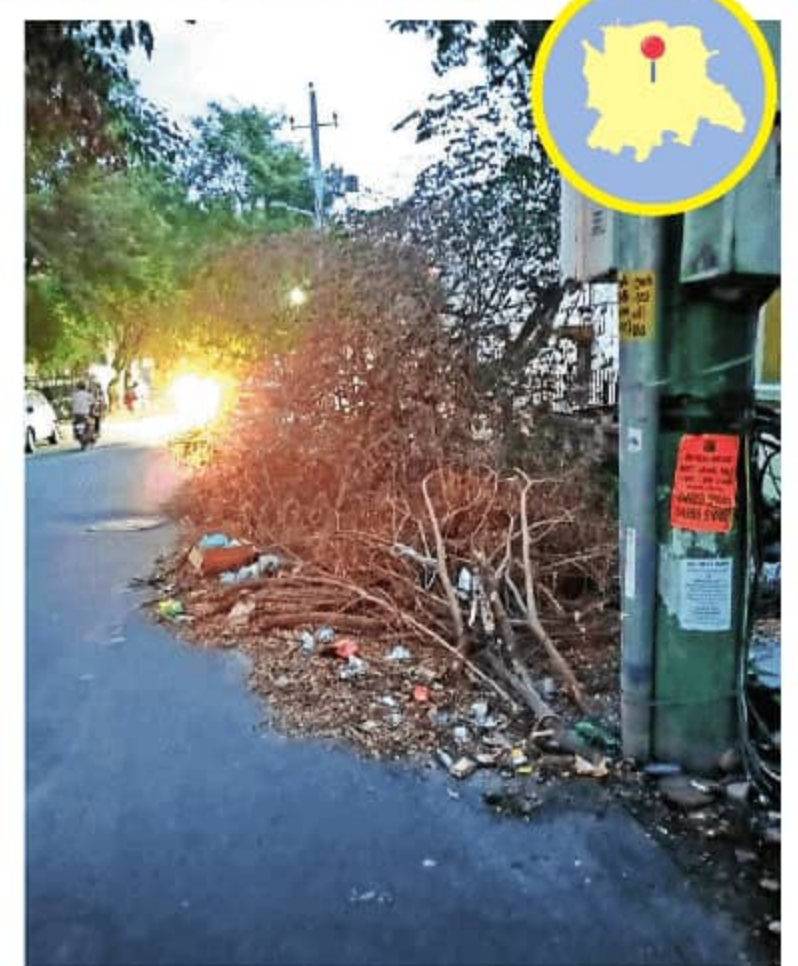
The spokesperson added that BIAL aims to build resilient communities through initiatives focused on education, water and sanitation, integrated development, and health and well-being.

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Tree hazard

Jeevan Bima Nagar



A fallen tree in Jeevan Bima Nagar has remained uncleared for several weeks, obstructing traffic and posing a risk to school children and commuters.

Road neglect

Marathahalli



The BWSSB road excavation beneath the Marathahalli Flyover has been left unrepaired, causing inconvenience amid heavy traffic.

Sankey sewage leak finally plugged

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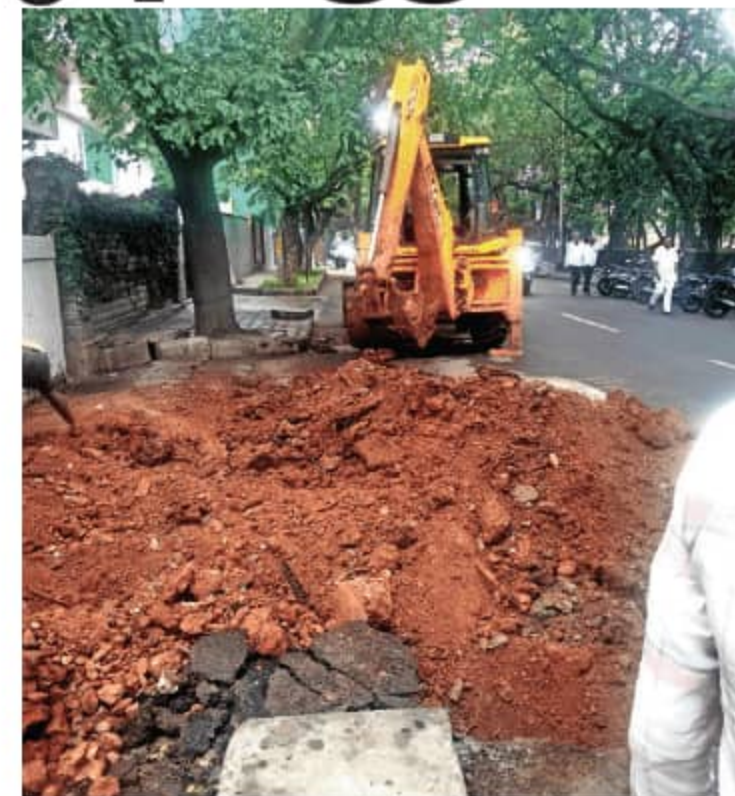
The repair of a leakage in an underground drainage (UGD) pipe on Dr Jeevaraj Alva Road near Sankey Tank may bring an end to criticism from residents and environmentalists, who have accused the authorities concerned of dereliction of duty and negligence.

With sewage entering the lake through one of its inlet pipes, residents and environmentalists had strongly criticised engineers of the Bengaluru West City Corporation (BWCC) Lakes Department and the Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) for failing to take adequate measures to prevent sewage from flowing into the lake. Under the banner of the citizens' collective, Voice of Sadashivanagar, they staged a protest on May 24 against the poor maintenance of the

lake, its declining water level and the inflow of sewage.

Meanwhile, Karnataka Upa Lokayukta Justice KN Phaneendra registered a suo motu complaint against the authorities responsible for maintaining Sankey Tank. Justice Phaneendra has summoned the authorities to appear before him on July 7 and submit reports on the measures taken to address the issues.

To identify the source of the sewage entering the lake, BWSSB engineers have been working extensively. A contractor was engaged to excavate sections of the road at various locations where leaks in UGD pipes were suspected. During the exercise, an old 230 mm UGD pipe was replaced with 300 mm concrete pipes. The workers eventually claimed to have located the leak in a UGD pipe near Dr Jeevaraj Alva's residence. "We noticed a leak in a UGD pipe around 15 days ago. Temporary measures were taken to stop



An earth moving machine filling up the ditch dug up to fix sewage leakage on Dr Jeevaraj Ala Road on Saturday

the sewage leakage, but they proved ineffective. Today, we fixed the leak by sealing a gap in a pipe joint. I am confident there will be no further flow of sewage into the lake," a BWSSB worker said.

Meanwhile, Shilpa Jatti of Voice of Sadashivanagar said she had noticed sewage flowing into the lake through one of the inlet pipes on Friday. "It will be good news if the BWSSB successfully fixes the leak in the UGD pipe. However, I believe the BWSSB engineers need to do more by inspecting all the lake's inlets and ensuring the proper flow of rainwater into the lake during the monsoon," she said.

Meanwhile, a BWSSB Assistant Executive Engineer said he had already informed the higher authorities about the sewage issue.

"We have been working on the problem. We have inspected several inlets, rectified issues with UGD pipes and replaced old pipes where necessary. We have also sent water samples from Sankey Tank to a laboratory and are awaiting the water quality report," the assistant executive engineer said. Whether the authorities will resolve the issue on a permanent basis remains to be seen. Residents and environmentalists will have to wait and see.

Damaged stretch

Coles Road



The damaged stretch of Coles Road opposite Kotak Mahindra Bank remains unattended despite repeated complaints to the BBMP.



Borrowing beyond EMIs

Can you get another loan if you're already paying EMIs? Here's all you need to know

When lenders assess your loan application, your salary is only the starting point. What really counts is what you have left after covering your current liabilities.

"Lenders look at your gross monthly income and subtract all current EMIs—home loans, car loans, personal loans, credit cards. What remains is your available income for a new loan," says Adhil Shetty, CEO, Bankbazaar.

The remaining amount becomes the basis for deciding whether you can take on a new loan. "Banks typically require your total monthly obligations (including the proposed loan) not to exceed 50-60 per cent of gross income. They want confidence you can service the new loan without defaulting on existing ones," adds Shetty. He further suggests borrowers to reveal the truth about all EMIs, as hiding obligations can lead to rejection or even legal complications.

Most important number lenders track

Calculation of a key ratio, Fixed Obligation to Income Ratio (FOIR), is very critical as it measures how



Lenders look at gross monthly income and all current EMIs before approving loans

much of your income is already committed to EMIs. It plays a crucial role in determining if you can get a new loan.

"Existing EMIs directly reduce your borrowing capacity. Higher existing obligations mean lower new loan eligibility," explains Shetty.

When do EMIs hurt your approval chances

There isn't a universal rejection number, but there is a clear threshold beyond which lenders grow uncomfortable. According to Shetty, once your total EMIs exceed 50-60 per cent of your income, most banks may reject your loan application automatically. The final threshold may vary from one bank to another.

While NBFCs may allow slightly higher ratios, sometimes up to 60-65 per cent, this flexibility often comes with higher costs. If you keep your

existing monthly outflow of all EMIs put together below 40 per cent, it would give you flexibility to take new loans whenever needed. The lower the FOIR, the higher will be your capacity to borrow more.

Why the type of EMI matters

Interestingly, lenders don't give equal weightage to all types of loan EMIs. The type of your existing loans plays a big role in how your profile is evaluated. "A Rs 30,000 home loan EMI impacts you less than a Rs 30,000 personal loan EMI because home loans are secured by collateral. Credit card debt is weighted highest due to default risk. Your credit mix matters. One home loan plus BNPL harms less than multiple unsecured loans. Lenders prefer borrowers with diversified but manageable debt," he says, highlighting how risk perception

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shapes lending decisions.

Can reducing EMIs improve loan eligibility?

For borrowers looking to improve their chances, reducing existing EMIs can make a tangible difference but only if the reduction is meaningful. "Prepaying or closing a loan does improve eligibility, but the impact depends on how much EMI you free up rather than the total loan size," says Kundan Shahi, Founder, Zavo.

For instance, if someone earning Rs 1 lakh is paying Rs 50,000 in EMIs, closing a Rs 5,000 EMI reduces the FOIR from 50 per cent to 45 per cent. This

seemingly small shift can increase loan eligibility by Rs 4-7 lakh, depending on tenure and interest rates.

Credit score vs EMI burden

While a strong credit score is important, it doesn't override your EMI burden. Shahi explains that a credit score of 750 or above improves approval chances and interest rates, but the actual loan amount is still determined by FOIR and repayment capacity. "Credit score builds lender confidence, while EMI burden defines borrowing capacity," he notes, underscoring the balance lenders seek.

-ET

City | BangaloreMirror

K'taka universities reel under GST shocker

Government mandates higher education institutions to levy and forward tax on college affiliation charges, sparking concern that escalating costs may ultimately burden students financially

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Universities in the state, already struggling with a severe shortage of faculty and inadequate government funding, are now staring at a fresh financial crisis following a directive to pay Goods and Services Tax (GST) on affiliation fees collected from colleges. The state government has instructed universities to calculate and remit 18 per cent GST on affiliation fees paid by affiliated colleges from 2017-18 onwards, following a clarification from the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) that such fees do not qualify for GST exemption. The move has triggered alarm among university administrators and educationists, who fear the financial burden could eventually be passed on to students.

For nearly nine years, GST payment on affiliation fees had remained on hold amid ongoing debates on whether educational institutions should be exempt from the tax.



Institutions now face prospect of paying GST on amounts collected from students who are no longer enrolled

However, after the CBIC clarified that affiliation fees are taxable, the state government directed universities to recover pending GST dues dating back to 2017-18. Universities have now begun issuing notices to affiliated colleges, demanding payment of 18 per cent GST on fees already paid over the past several years.

Education experts have strongly criticised the decision, calling it impractical and unscientific. "Affiliation fees are collected by colleges based on student strength and courses offered and the amount is typically recovered from students as part of their academic expenses. While colleges could have factored GST into fees had it been mandated from the beginning, asking institutions to pay tax retrospectively on fees collected nearly a decade

ago has created confusion and hardship," said a university official on condition of anonymity.

Several colleges have reportedly already received notices demanding lakhs of rupees in GST dues. A college chairman, requesting anonymity, said his institution had been asked to pay Rs 6.8 lakh as GST arrears. "Students who paid those fees completed their education years ago. How are colleges expected to recover that money now?" he questioned.

The issue is particularly worrying because many colleges have already shut down in recent years due to financial difficulties, including their inability to pay affiliation fees. Institutions now face the prospect of paying GST on amounts collected from students who are no longer enrolled. University officials say

University officials say they are in no position to absorb liability themselves, with many state universities already struggling to fund operational expenses and pay pensions to retired employees

they are in no position to absorb the liability themselves. Many state universities are already struggling to fund infrastructure maintenance, meet operational expenses and pay pensions to retired employees.

Responding to the controversy, Karnataka University Vice-Chancellor Prof AM Khan said universities had only collected affiliation fees from colleges and had not accounted for GST on those payments. The government's direction to pay 18 per cent GST on fees collected since 2017-18 has placed a substantial burden on universities, he said. Prof Khan added that universities are preparing to approach the government seeking relief, citing Supreme Court observations that educational institutions should not be subjected to GST.

In some cases, individual universities may have to pay more than Rs 2 crore in GST arrears. Until clarity emerges, colleges remain caught between government orders and mounting financial pressure, with concerns growing that students may ultimately bear the cost.

Death by water? Alarm after elephant dies in 'toxic corridor'

Decades of sewage discharge and industrial pollution have left the Arkavathi battling contamination, raising concerns over ecological damage

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For years, Bengalureans have known that the Arkavathi River was polluted. The blackened water, foul odours and untreated sewage flowing through the city's north-western industrial belt had already turned the once-pristine river into an environmental embarrassment. However, the mysterious death of a female elephant in the forests of Bengaluru South district has now raised a far more chilling possibility: has Bengaluru's polluted river become so toxic that it is silently killing wildlife before even reaching the Cauvery?

Environmentalists say the incident has exposed a disturbing truth hiding in plain sight: the Arkavathi may no longer be merely a polluted river, but a toxic corridor carrying industrial chemicals, sewage and other contaminants from the city directly into Karnataka's forests, villages and groundwater systems.

The alarm was raised after a female elephant died under mysterious circumstances in the Magguru forest region near Kanakapura in Bengaluru South district. Forest officials who conducted the post-mortem reportedly found nearly 35 litres of water inside the animal's body. Investigators suspect that the elephant may have consumed water from the Arkavathi River, which flows close to the forest stretch, shortly before its death.



Polluted waters raise alarm over forest wildlife survival

Polluted waterways linked to industrial discharge and sewage face scrutiny as activists demand answers, warning groundwater, agriculture and biodiversity remain at risk

Reports by the Pollution Control Board have repeatedly classified the Arkavathi as one of the most contaminated rivers in the state, with untreated sewage and industrial waste continuously entering it from Bengaluru's urban and industrial zones. The elephant's death has now intensified concerns that the contamination may be directly affecting wildlife.

An official said, "The Arkavathi's transformation into a toxic river begins as it flows through Bengaluru's industrial pockets, particularly the Peenya industrial area, one of the largest manufacturing hubs in the country." Environ-

mentalists allege that untreated industrial effluents containing heavy metals such as lead, arsenic and chromium enter the river alongside large volumes of sewage. By the time the river reaches Bengaluru South district, the pollution burden increases further. Human waste from settlements along the riverbanks is allegedly discharged directly into the river at several locations. Near Doddamudavadi village in Kanakapura taluk, the heavily polluted Vrishabhavathi River, which carries much of Bengaluru's sewage, joins the Arkavathi through the Byramangala Lake system,

effectively increasing the contamination load significantly.

K Kumar, a green activist, said, "The crisis becomes even more severe during summer, when natural water sources within forests dry up completely. Elephants, deer, leopards and several other wild animals are left with no choice but to depend on polluted river water for survival. Environmental experts warn that prolonged consumption of chemically contaminated water can damage vital organs such as the liver and kidneys, eventually leading to poisoning and premature death among animals." They fear the Magguru elephant may be only the first visible warning sign of a much larger ecological crisis.

The threat is no longer limited to wildlife. Villagers living along the river basin say that groundwater sources near the Arkavathi and Vrishabhavathi rivers have already become contaminated. Residents continue to use the water for irrigation, raising fears that toxic substances could be entering the food chain through crops, milk and livestock. Environmental activists are now demanding that the elephant's post-mortem report be made public and examined thoroughly for evidence of chemical poisoning. They are also urging the authorities to ensure that only fully treated water is discharged into the river and to create clean artificial water sources within forests before more animals fall victim to Bengaluru's polluted rivers.

Cops recover gold, arrest duo

Officials from Jnanabharathi Police Station have seized 45.82 grams of gold mangalsutra chains worth Rs 5 lakh and arrested two persons in connection with the case.

According to the complaint, the victim was on an evening walk on May 18, when two men on a two-wheeler snatched her gold mangalsutra chain and fled.

Police arrested the two accused on May 21 and 22 and recovered 45.82 grams of gold jewellery, including the stolen chain, along with the two-wheeler used in the crime. Both were later remanded to judicial custody. **-BMB**

House attack accused held

Hebbal Police have seized 40 grams of gold ornaments, a mobile phone and a two-wheeler worth a total of Rs 6.70 lakh. One person has been arrested in connection with the case.

According to the complaint, an unidentified man entered the victim's house, assaulted her and fled with her gold mangalsutra and mobile phone. Police arrested the accused from Kanakanagar on May 30. During interrogation, he confessed to the offence and another similar crime. He was remanded to judicial custody, and further investigation is under way. **-BMB**

Eleven stolen bikes recovered

A resident of Pai Layout filed a complaint with Byappanahalli Police Station on May 22, after discovering that his two-wheeler, parked near HDFC Bank on 80 Feet Road in Indiranagar, had been stolen on May 15. Police detained a man near Channasandra Bus Stand in Chikkaballapur district, who confessed to stealing two-wheelers since 2022. Police recovered 11 stolen vehicles worth Rs 7.50 lakh from a garage in Madanapalle. He was remanded to judicial custody and linked to six theft cases. **-BMB**

Cat's instinct



In a heart-warming twist, a pet cat emerged as an unlikely hero after saving its owners' lives. Moments before their mud house collapsed, the frightened animal darted outside after a section of the roof gave way. When the father and son followed it out, the entire structure came crashing down behind them. Though property worth around ₹1.5 lakh was destroyed, both escaped unharmed, crediting their pet's timely dash to safety for saving their lives.

Camera caution

At his first official press conference in the new role, Chief Minister DK Shivakumar made an unusual request before taking questions. Noticing a large group seated behind him, he asked all but one or two relevant officials to leave, remarking that many were there simply to appear in the camera frame. Only after clearing the backdrop of these would-be photobombers did he begin his interaction with journalists.



NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Bittersweet oath



For newly inducted minister Dr Yathindra Siddaramaiah, his first media interaction after taking oath was emotional. While happy to join the Cabinet for the first time, he expressed sadness that his father, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, could not complete a full five-year term. Reflecting the moment, Yathindra went straight to his father after the swearing-in ceremony, touched his feet and sought his blessings before greeting supporters.

Sacred setup

Ahead of DK Shivakumar formally assuming office as Chief Minister, his astrologer and Vastu consultant Aaradhya inspected the CM's chamber on the third floor of Vidhana Soudha. The office was briefly vacated for the exercise, following which minor changes to furniture placement were suggested. A portrait of his revered deity, Nonavinakere Ajjayya, along with other devotional images, was installed in the room, and special prayers were conducted before Shivakumar's arrival.

Sacred seat

DK Shivakumar's first entry into the Chief Minister's office on the third floor of Vidhana Soudha was marked by reverence rather than ceremony. As he approached the office door, he paused, folded his hands, touched the entrance and only then stepped inside. Priests conducted a special pooja in the chamber, with the new Chief Minister participating throughout. Before he could occupy the coveted chair, the priests sprinkled holy water on it as part of the rituals. Shivakumar once again folded his hands in prayer before the chair, acknowledging the significance of the office, and only then took his seat.

Walk the talk



While most newly sworn-in ministers chose official vehicles after the oath-taking ceremony at Lok Bhavan, Krishna Byregowda opted for a different route. Instead of driving the short distance of about a kilometre to Vidhana Soudha, the minister set off on foot, accompanied by a handful of close aides. The walk through the heart of the city may not have saved much time, but it certainly stood out in a convoy-heavy political

culture, turning a routine journey to the office into a quiet statement of simplicity.

Hope persists

Magadi MLA HC Balakrishna summed up Karnataka's leadership transition with a striking metaphor, saying Siddaramaiah had laid the foundation stone and it was now DK Shivakumar's task to construct the building. Asked about missing out on a ministerial berth, he responded philosophically, noting that while aspirations are natural in politics, the final decision rests with the party high command. With a smile, he added that hope is something every politician continues to carry, irrespective of the outcome.

Family frame

The swearing-in ceremony had its share of carefully managed photo opportunities. When DK Shivakumar's family gathered for a group photograph with Rahul Gandhi, a few eager politicians quickly stepped into the frame. Spotting the crowding, DKS personally intervened, asking them to move aside before arranging his family for the picture. He brought his wife, daughter, son and son-in-law to the front, ensuring it remained a family portrait rather than a political gathering. The photo session was later elevated when Mallikarjun Kharge was invited to join the group, turning it into a memorable keepsake from a landmark day. **-Sridhar Vivan**



BM SIMPLY PUT

How advanced tech and professional teams deliver comprehensive match view, stats & more

In IPL show, tech is man of match



With the curtains coming down on IPL 2026 after another season packed with last-ball thrillers, towering sixes and packed stadiums, cricket fans have once again celebrated the world's biggest T20 league. But while players battle it out on the field, an equally remarkable contest unfolds behind the scenes. From artificial intelligence and ultra-slow-motion cameras to cloud-based editing and augmented reality, a vast technological ecosystem works around the clock to deliver every ball, replay and statistic seamlessly to more than a billion viewers across television and digital platforms. As the IPL continues to evolve into one of the world's most sophisticated sporting productions, here's a look at the technology that makes the magic possible.

How is artificial intelligence used during IPL broadcasts?

AI acts as a virtual assistant to broadcasters. It analyses player data, ball-tracking information and historical records to generate real-time graphics, tactical insights and predictive statistics. It can also flag interesting match trends for commentators and production teams.

How are match highlights available within minutes?

Through remote production and cloud-based editing systems. Even when matches are played in different cities, editors based in production hubs such as Mumbai or Bengaluru can create and publish highlights within a minute of a key moment occurring.

What is UltraEdge?

UltraEdge uses audio analysis technology to detect faint sounds when the ball brushes a bat or pad. The system helps third umpires determine whether contact occurred during close review decisions.

What makes IPL broadcasting a technological marvel?

Every six, wicket, replay, statistic and graphic that appears on screen is powered by a complex network of cameras, AI systems, cloud computing, data analytics and telecom infrastructure. What viewers experience as a seamless live broadcast is the result of months of planning and the coordinated efforts of hundreds of technology and production

How does IPL provide commentary in multiple languages?

AI-driven translation tools can instantly convert commentary into regional languages while preserving the original commentator's tone and style, helping broadcasters reach diverse audiences across India.

What are tactical feeds?

Tactical feeds are specialised broadcasts designed for serious cricket followers. They provide deeper analysis, advanced statistics and strategic insights, while younger viewers can access polls, interactive features and entertainment-focused content.

What are hyper-personalised advertisements?

Using computer vision technology, broadcasters can display different virtual advertisements to viewers based on their geographic location. Two viewers watching the same match may see different brands displayed on the boundary boards.

How many cameras are typically used during an IPL match?

Broadcasters deploy between 30 and 40 high-definition and super slow-motion cameras around the stadium. These cameras capture thousands of frames per second, producing crystal-clear replays and supporting decision-making technologies.

What is Hawk-Eye and how does it work?

Hawk-Eye uses multiple cameras positioned around the ground to track the ball's movement. AI-powered systems then predict the ball's future trajectory, helping umpires make accurate LBW decisions through visual simulations.



Preliminary group analysis, squads and their chances with FIFA rankings

Group B

Canada (30), Bosnia & Herzegovina (64), Qatar (55), Switzerland (19)

Switzerland and Canada could qualify from Group B. With their experienced midfielder Granit Xhaka to guide and inspire them, Switzerland have done well at this level. Goalkeepers Marvin Keller and Gregor Kobel inspire a lot of confidence though the strike force appears a little blunted despite the presence of Zeki Amdouni and Johan Manzambi. Fortunately for them, they are not in a very competitive group with Canada, Qatar and Bosnia & Herzegovina yet to perform well in a World Cup. Canada could well make the next round playing at home with Bosnia & Herzegovina a surprise packet. Remember Bosnia & Herzegovina shocked Italy on penalties in the deciding play-off and prevented the four-time champions from qualifying for the third straight time. They are capable of similar upsets.

Canada - Les Rouges (The Reds), The Canucks



Canada defender Derek Cornelius, center, warms up during the selection camp for Canada's national soccer team, in this May 28 file photo

Goalkeepers: Dayne St Clair, Maxime Crepeau, Owen Goodman.

Defenders: Alistair Johnston, Derek Cornelius, Richie Laryea, Niko Sigur, Joel Waterman, Luc de Fougerolles, Moise Bombito, Alphonso Davies, Alfie Jones.

Midfielders: Stephen Eustaquio, Ismael Kone, Tajon Buchanan, Mathieu Choiniere, Ali Ahmed, Nathan Saliba, Liam Millar, Jacob Shaffelburg, Jonathan Osorio.

Attackers: Jonathan David, Cyle Larin, Tani Oluwaseyi, Promise David. Manager: Jesse Marsch (USA)

Bosnia and Herzegovina - Zlatni Ljiljani (Golden Lilies)



Bosnia and Herzegovina players pose for a team group photo before a qualifier match

Goalkeepers: Nikola Vasilj, Martin Zlomisljic, Osman Hadzikic.

Defenders: Sead Kolasinac, Amar Dedic, Nihad Mujakic, Nikola Katic, Tarik Muharemovic, Stjepan Radeljic, Dennis Hadzikadunic, Nidal Celik.

Midfielders: Amir Hadziahmetovic, Ivan Sunjic, Ivan Basic, Dzenis Burnic, Ermin Mahmic, Benjamin Tahirovic, Amar Memic, Armin Gigovic, Kerim Alajbegovic, Esmir Bajraktarevic.

Forwards: Ermedin Demirovic, Jovo Lukic,

Samed Bazdar, Haris Tabakovic, Edin Dzeko. Manager: Sergej Barbarez (Bosnia).

Qatar - The Maroons



Players of Qatar line up during the National Anthems prior to the FIFA World Cup 2026 qualifier match between Qatar and United Arab Emirates

Goalkeepers: Salah Zakaria, Meshaal Barsham, Mahmoud Abunada.

Defenders: Boualem Khokhi, Pedro Miguel, Sultan Al Brake, Al Hashmi Al Hussain, Ayoub Al Alawi, Issa Laye, Lucas Mendes, Homam Al Amin.

Midfielders: Ahmed Fathi, Jassim Gaber, Assim Madibo, Abdulaziz Hatem, Karim Bou-diaf, Mohammed Mannai.

Forwards: Almoez Ali, Akram Afif, Tahsin Mohammed, Edmilson Junior, Ahmed Al-Janehi, Ahmed Alaa, Hassan Al Haydos, Mohammed Muntari, Yusuf Abdurisag. Manager: Julen Lopetegui (Spain).

Switzerland - Schweizer Nati (The National Team)



Switzerland's players pose before a friendly match between Switzerland and Jordan ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup football tournament at the Kybunpark stadium

Goalkeepers: Marvin Keller, Gregor Kobel, Yvon Mvogo.

Defenders: Manuel Akanji, Aurele Amenda, Eray Comert, Nico Elvedi, Luca Jaquez, Miro Muheim, Ricardo Rodriguez, Silvan Widmer.

Midfielders: Michel Aebischer, Christian Fassnacht, Remo Freuler, Ardon Jashari, Fabian Rieder, Djibril Sow, Cedric Itten, Granit Xhaka, Denis Zakaria.

Forwards: Ruben Vargas, Zeki Amdouni, Breel Embolo, Dan Ndoye, Noah Okafor, Johan Manzambi. Manager: Murat Yakin (Switzerland).

Defenders: Ricardo Ade, Carlens Arcus, Hannes Delcroix, Jean-Kevin Duverne, Martin Experience, Duke Lacroix, Wilguens Paugain, Keeto Thermoncy.

Midfielders: Carl Fred Sainte, Jean-Ricner Bellegarde, Levertton Pierre, Danley Jean Jacques, Woodensky Pierre, Dominique Simon.

Forwards: Josue Casimir, Loucius Deedson, Derrick Etienne Jr., Yassin Fortune, Wilson Isidor, Lenny Joseph, Duckens Nazon, Frantzdy Pierrot, Ruben Providence. Manager: Sébastien Migne (France).

Judiciary raises concern over substance abuse in state

Bengaluru has recorded the highest number of cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act in Karnataka, prompting concerns from the judiciary over the growing threat of substance abuse in the state.

Speaking at a state-level consultation on the prevention of drug abuse organised at the Karnataka Judicial Academy, Karnataka High Court judge Justice Jayant Banerji described the battle against narcotics as critical to protecting young people, families and society at large.

He stressed that drug abuse should not be viewed merely as a policing issue but as a wider public health challenge with long-term social consequences.

Justice Banerji noted that Bengaluru alone has registered 6,743 NDPS cases, the highest in the state. According to him, the rising number of cases points to both the expansion of illegal drug networks and increasing substance abuse, developments that have become a matter of concern for law enforcement agencies, policymakers and health experts alike.

He said efforts to combat drug abuse must go beyond arrests and sei-

zures, emphasising the need to safeguard the future of Karnataka's youth and preserve the social fabric of communities.

At the same event, former judge Justice John Michael Cunha, who chairs the DAWN Scheme of the National Legal Services Authority, highlighted another worrying trend — the declining age at which individuals are beginning to use narcotic substances.

He observed that addiction often has a severe impact on women and children and called for stronger protection and rehabilitation measures for vulnerable groups.

Justice Cunha also urged judicial officers, prosecutors and legal aid lawyers to make greater use of provisions under Section 64A of the NDPS Act, which allows individuals struggling with addiction to access treatment and rehabilitation.

Meanwhile, Justice Anu Sivaraman, Executive Chairperson of the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, suggested establishing dedicated de-addiction centres for juveniles to address substance abuse among young people more effectively.

BMB

Violations in 2025 stayed high at 1.60 crore cases

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Two more were offered in 2025 from August 23 to September 12 and from November 21 to December 12. Now, the government has announced a fourth 50% discount on pending traffic e-challans, which will be in effect from June 21 to July 10, 2026.

According to an official document dated June 4, the Member Secretary of the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority informed the government about the upcoming National Lok Adalat. The document stated that during the previous 50% traffic fine discount scheme announced in November 2025, about 77.41 lakh police traffic cases were settled, helping the government collect around ₹201 crore.

In addition, 902 cases handled by the Transport Department were cleared, bringing in nearly ₹29.66 lakh in fines. The authority also noted that about ₹2,827 crore is still pending in unpaid traffic fines. To recover this amount, it requested the government to offer another 50% discount on pending e-challans issued by the Police and Transport Departments.

In 2023, traffic e-challans worth nearly ₹500 crore remained unpaid. Bengaluru recorded 1.27 crore traffic violations that year,

leading to fines of ₹680.70 crore. The number of violations increased by around 28% in 2024 to 1.62 crore cases, with fines touching ₹921.33 crore. In 2025, violations remained high at 1.60 crore cases, resulting in penalties of ₹920.89 crore.

Shreehari explained that repeated discount schemes could encourage people to break traffic rules because they may expect another opportunity to pay reduced fines later.

Instead of offering discounts, he said, the government should focus on road safety awareness and ensure that violators are punished according to the law. According to him, some motorists may start believing that they can break rules, wait for a discount, pay only half the fine, and continue with their violations.

"The offences such as jumping traffic signals, riding without a helmet, or driving without a seat belt are not minor mistakes. Such violations can lead to accidents, injuries, and even deaths of motorists and pedestrians. These rules are important safety measures designed to protect lives and reduce road accidents," Shreehari added.

He further suggested that traffic police should seize vehicles of violators and ensure that fines are paid immediately or within a few

hours. "Once the offender leaves, there is no guarantee that the fine will be paid later. Immediate collection of penalties would improve compliance and strengthen enforcement," he said.

Vinod Jacob, urban strategist & civic activist, said that penalties are effective only when violators believe punishment is certain and unavoidable. He argued that instead of repeatedly offering discounts on pending fines, officials should take stricter action against habitual offenders.

If a rider commits the same violation more than three times or accumulates multiple fines, the authorities should consider suspending the driving licence or seizing the vehicle.

He added that frequent discounts have created a lenient attitude towards traffic violations and discourage people from following the rules. According to him, stricter enforcement is necessary to improve lane discipline and curb repeat offences on Bengaluru's roads.

A senior traffic police official said that the department is only implementing the government's order and declined to comment further on the discount scheme. However, the official urged motorists to clear their pending fines and strictly follow traffic rules to ensure road safety.

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I Shefali Anand Agarwal R/o Genesis Apts Suncity, Sarjapur ORR Bangalore, have changed my name to Shefali Agarwal for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 01-06-2026 sworn before the Notary A.R. Muneer Ahmed.

I, Manjunatha Kunabevu Math R/o, 64, Magadi Main Road, Saphthigiri Layout, Kachohalli Main Rd, Chikkagollarahatti, Bengaluru - 560091, have changed my name to Manjunath Kunabevu Math.

I, B J Umesh Kumar R/o Door No 3019, Yelepete Doddaballapur Bengaluru Rural District - 561203 have changed my minor daughter's name from Ruchitha B U to Ramitha B U.

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Dasappa.H bin Hobalappa.D #179, Farm House, Yaranapalya, Near Petro Park Apartment, Ramamurthy Nagar, Bangalore North, Durvani Nagar, Bangalore, Karnataka-560016 Mo.No.9980216178, I have obtained a pure purchase deed registered in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Malur on 26/02/2005 in the 1st Book as Register No. M.L.R-1-03373-2004-05, CD No. M.L.R.D9. The said pure purchase deed was lost on 01/05/2026 at the time of changing the house in Bangalore.

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THAILAND 05 DAYS JULY: 22, AUG: 23

VIETNAM 08 DAYS AUG: 04

SRI LANKA 07 DAYS AUG: 29

ANDAMAN 6 DAYS AUG: 12

BALI 07 DAYS JULY: 09, AUG: 24

KAILASH MANASA SAROVAR 14 DAYS AUG: 25

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Kitchen turns battleground against inflation

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

expense. Every refill now feels like a financial shock. The burden ultimately falls on women who manage household budgets," she said.

Reacting strongly to the latest increase, former minister Laxmi Hebbalkar termed the decision "anti-people" and questioned how ordinary families were expected to cope with the mounting cost of living. "This is the second LPG price hike in just three months. While the prices of essential commodities are rising every day, the BJP-led Central government has further increased the burden on the poor, middle-class families and homemakers by raising cooking gas prices. The kitchen is the centre of every household, and any increase in LPG prices directly impacts the family budget managed by women," she said.

Hebbalkar pointed out that consumers were already reeling under the impact of higher petrol and diesel prices. She noted that the Centre had recently increased commercial LPG cylinder prices, leading to higher costs for hotel meals, snacks, tea and coffee. "Now domestic LPG prices have also been increased substantially. How are ordinary people expected to survive under such circumstances?" she asked.

Consumer groups fear that the latest increase could further strain



household finances across urban and rural India, particularly among lower and middle-income families where cooking gas accounts for a significant share of monthly expenses. With inflationary pressures showing little sign of easing, many families say every price revision now forces difficult choices between savings, education, healthcare and daily necessities.

Centre standardises edible oil pack sizes

Meanwhile, the Union Consumer Affairs Department has mandated standard pack sizes for edible oils, preventing companies from selling products in arbitrary quantities. Under the revised Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), edible oils can now be sold only in nine standard pack sizes: 200 ml/g, 500 ml/g, 1 litre/kg, 2 litres/kg, 3 litres/kg, 4 litres/kg, 5

litres/kg, 15 litres/kg and 20 litres/kg. Manufacturers, packers and importers have been given three months to comply with the new norms. The rule will apply to major edible oils, including palm, soybean, sunflower, groundnut, mustard, sesame, rice bran, cottonseed and corn oil, as well as blended edible oils.

The decision was taken after consultations with leading edible oil industry associations and is expected to make it easier for consumers to compare brands and prices while making purchase decisions. As per the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011, edible oil packages must clearly display both quantity (in ml or litres) and weight. The regulations will apply to both domestically produced and imported edible oils, while packs containing 200 ml/g or less have been exempted.



Open-ended toys and shared experiences encourage creativity while reducing household clutter



LESS STUFF, HAPPIER KIDS

Kids need things, but they grow out of toys, clothes and furniture quickly. Families can struggle with clutter, as seen on decluttering shows like BBC One's *Sort Your Life Out*, where families sort through large amounts of toys and children's clothes.

Children and parents are also under increasing pressure to buy more. Adverts are embedded into online content and games, while kid influencers create videos of themselves unboxing new toys, adding to the pressure to purchase.

Large volumes of clutter can cause stress in households. Alongside the feeling that things are getting out of control, there is also environmental guilt. Most plastic toys with electrical parts, for example, cannot be separated for recycling and often end up in

landfill.

As part of my research for a book on minimalism, I interviewed 12 minimalist parents who intentionally try to live with fewer belongings for themselves and their children. Here are five ways they manage kids' clutter.

Say no to kids

This can be difficult. As one parent described: "You go to a supermarket and they're like 'I want this, I want this'."

Some parents prevent impulse purchases by asking their children to take a photo of what they want and add it to a wish list for birthdays or Christmas.

This acknowledges the child's wishes. "If they still want the same thing when those events come around, it's quite a good indicator it's something they really would like, not some passing phase or interest."

Parents also manage expectations around Christmas and birthday gifts by limiting presents to four items. This approach follows the saying: "Something you want, something you need, something to wear and something to read."

Gift experiences

Managing gifts from friends and family can be challenging, especially from grandparents. A 2019 US study found grandparents spent an average of US\$805 each year on gifts for their grandchildren. In the UK, grandparents intend to spend almost £100 on each grandchild at Christmas.

Some minimalist parents try to limit gifts by requesting specific items their children genuinely want, contributions towards a larger gift, or experiences such as trips to the zoo, bowling outings or cinema tickets.

Parents also prioritised low-cost experiences over buying more things, including outdoor play in parks and visits to local libraries.

Invest in open-ended toys

Children still need toys and play materials to support cognitive development and learning.

However, having fewer toys can help them focus better and play more creatively.

The minimalist parents I interviewed preferred simple open-ended toys. These are toys that can be used in many different ways, such as building blocks, magnetic tiles and play silks. They encourage creative and imaginative play while reducing the need for large numbers of toys.

Put things in their place

Organising children's belongings can still be challenging. Parents said they managed this by giving every item a designated home — a specific place where it belongs.

One parent explained: "I found that making sure that everything had a home was really the only way that I was able to keep my children organised, keep my life organised."

Another parent kept all toys in a storage box: "We have a rule that everything has to fit in there."

If toys begin to overflow, children must get rid of something before bringing in more.

One parent said they were happy for their children to organise their bedrooms however they wished, but shared family spaces such as the living room and kitchen needed to remain clutter-free.

Pass it on

When children outgrow something, minimalist parents do not let items sit unused. Instead, they sell, donate or pass them on to friends and family.

This helps keep homes free from clutter while extending the life of objects. It also prevents other families from having to buy new items, reducing the use of additional resources.

There is much to be said for adopting some of these minimalist parenting practices. Buying fewer new things, choosing local experiences and passing on children's belongings after they outgrow them can bring personal benefits, including lower spending and less clutter. These habits can also support a more sustainable way of living.

By Amber Martin-Woodhead,
Manchester Metropolitan University
The Conversation

MIND, BODY & HEART



All you need to know about...

Burnout warning

Beyond workplace burnout

Burnout is often associated with corporate professionals juggling long hours and demanding schedules. However, experts say burnout is not limited to workplaces and can affect anyone exposed to prolonged stress, including students and homemakers. Unlike workplace stress, which is widely discussed, emotional exhaustion among students and homemakers is frequently dismissed as a normal part of life.

Student pressure builds

For students, pressure often starts early and intensifies over time. Academic competition, examinations, family expectations and the constant need to perform can create a cycle where rest feels undeserved. Without clear boundaries between study and personal time, even moments of relaxation may be accompanied by guilt. Over time, this can lead to fatigue, irritability, loss of motivation, difficulty concentrating and feelings of inadequacy.

Unseen household burden

Homemakers face continuous responsibilities that require significant physical and emotional effort. Managing households, caring for children, organising schedules and providing emotional support leave little room for breaks. Dr Madhu says homemakers often experience "endless attention with few, if any, pauses," leaving them emotionally exhausted and overwhelmed.

Recognising warning signs

Persistent fatigue, mood swings, emotional detachment and difficulty concentrating can signal burnout. Early intervention, setting boundaries, making time for rest and encouraging conversations around mental health can make a significant difference.

—Femina



MIRRORLIGHTS

Scientists uncover two autism brain patterns

A study has identified at least two distinct subtypes of autism—one with increased connectivity associated with immune-related systems and another with reduced connectivity linked to synaptic pathways that help brain cells send signals to one another.

Findings published in *Nature Neuroscience* pave the way for developing tools for precise, personalised autism care and support, researchers said. Autism is a neurodevelopmental disorder marked

by repetitive behaviour and impaired social skills. The disorder is also associated with abnormal patterns of hyperconnectivity, or over-communication between brain regions, and hypoconnectivity, or reduced communication.

The team, led by researchers including those at the Italian Institute of Technology and the Child Mind Institute in the US, analysed brain connectivity across 20 mouse models and brain scans from 940 children and young adults with

autism and over 1,000 neurotypical individuals.

The analysis revealed two reproducible autism subtypes—one marked by hypoconnectivity linked to synaptic pathways and another by hyperconnectivity associated with immune-related systems. Together, the subtypes accounted for about 25 per cent of individuals with autism examined in the study.

"For decades, we've observed tremendous variability in how autism manifests, but we lacked direct evidence that these differ-

ences reflected distinct underlying biology," author Alessandro Gozzi of the Italian Institute of Technology said.

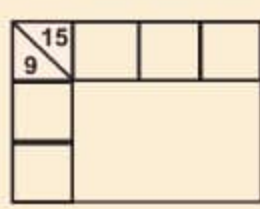
"Our approach enabled us to isolate specific genetic and immune factors, then translate those signatures to human brain scans, showing that different connectivity patterns encode different mechanistic pathways underlying autism," Gozzi said.

The human data came from the Autism Brain Imaging Data Exchange and the Child Mind Institute.

—PTI

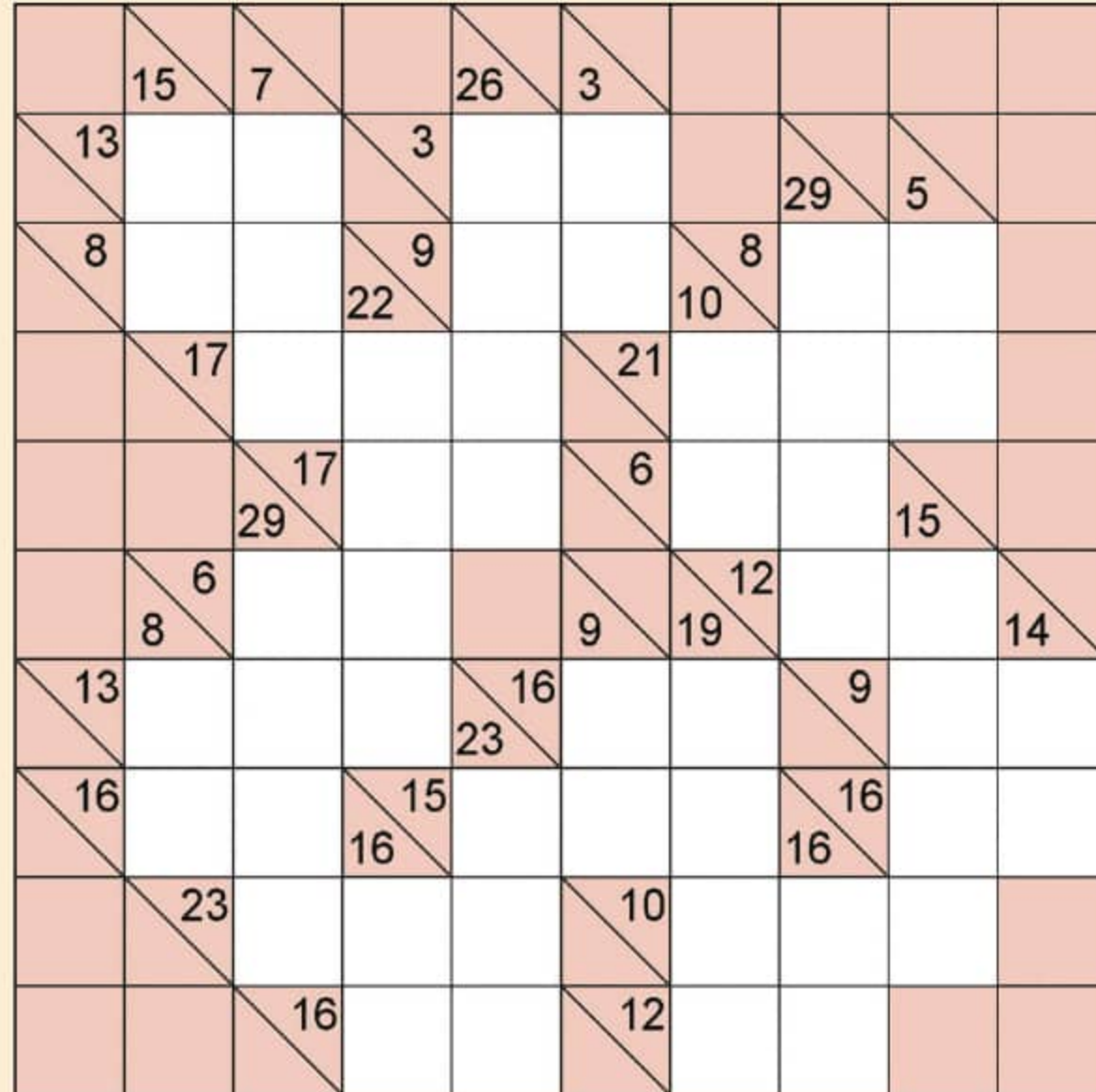
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

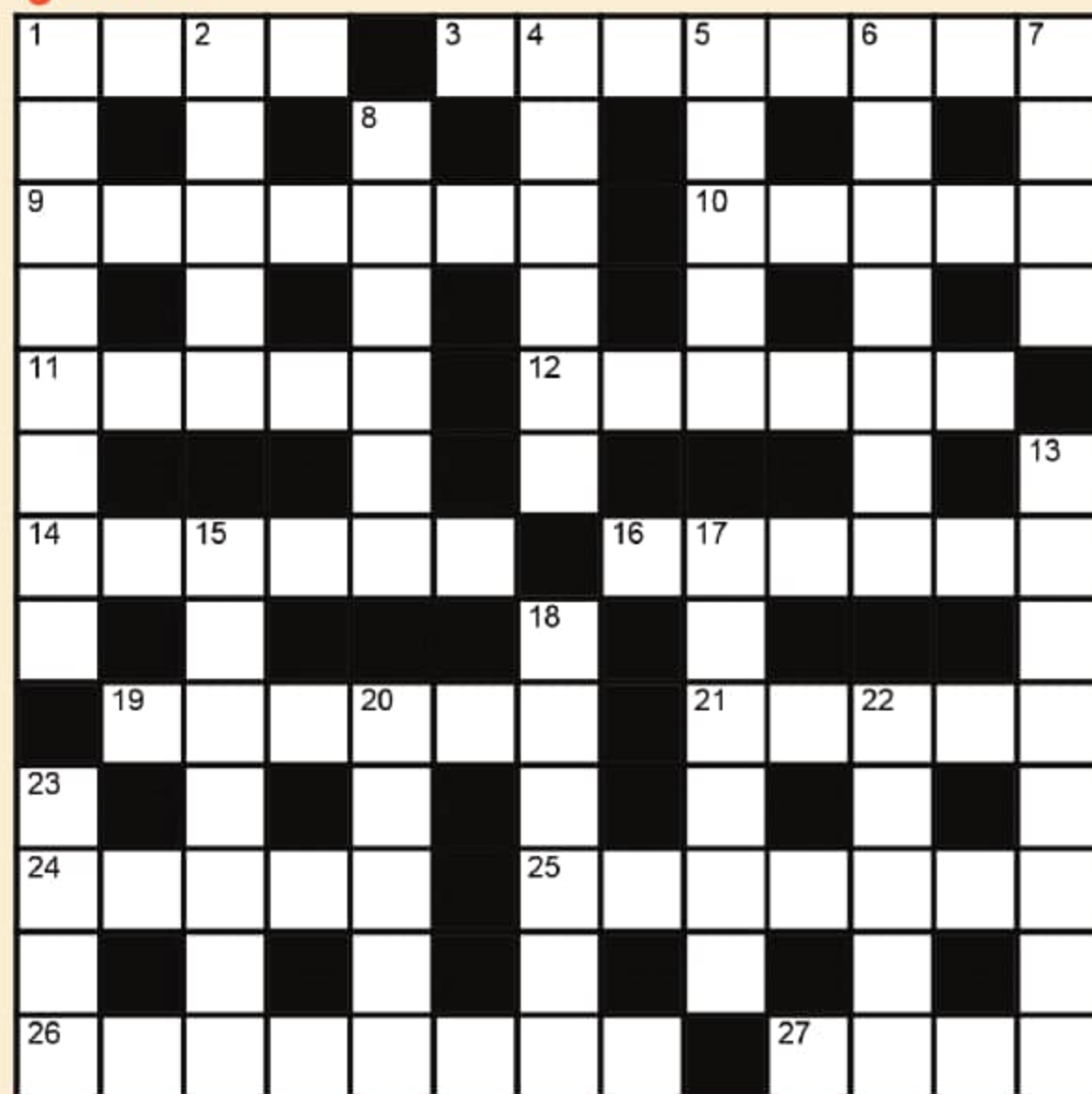


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

- 1 Drag (4)
- 3 Double-crossed (8)
- 9 M in M G Road (7)
- 10 Had supper (5)
- 11 Before time (5)
- 12 Runs away to marry (6)
- 14 Get away (6)
- 16 World's largest country (6)
- 19 Unidirectional (3,3)
- 21 Power (5)
- 24 Beehive dweller (5)
- 25 Takes out a policy? (7)
- 26 Infringe on one's property (8)
- 27 Not as new (4)

DOWN

- 1 Hindered, stopped movements of (8)
- 2 Doorkeeper (5)
- 4 Overjoyed (6)
- 5 Cowboy competition (5)
- 6 Slang for those crazy Americans? (7)
- 7 Extinct bird (4)
- 8 Not go to bed (4,2)
- 13 Christened or named (8)
- 15 Add up to, signify or symbolise? (7)
- 17 Extreme (6)
- 18 Doubters (6)
- 20 Young dog, pup (5)
- 22 Lasses (5)
- 23 Modify the text (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: F EQUALS P
IDIV-UVIUB CM UOV FVCFGV
ZVEV KEVLUVW BC PCR ZORGW
ZLIU UC JV ZDUO UOV CUOVE
UVIUO.



Linemaro

Baby, you make my palms sweaty, knees weak, arms sphagetti



Mindchow

There is nothing that will kill a man so soon as having nobody to find fault with but himself



Joke of the day

No speech can be entirely bad if it is short enough

Loop

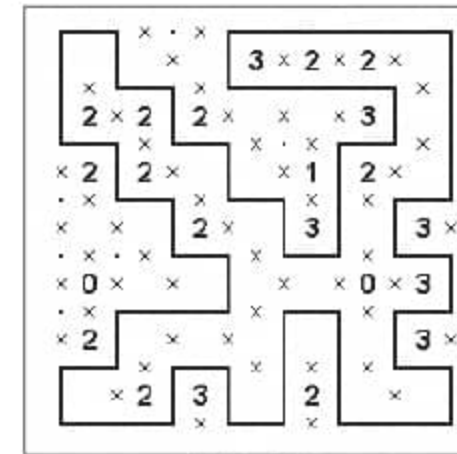
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

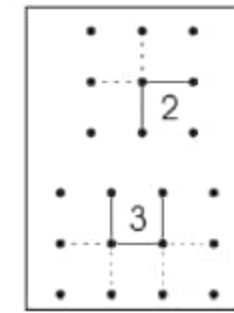
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) - Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

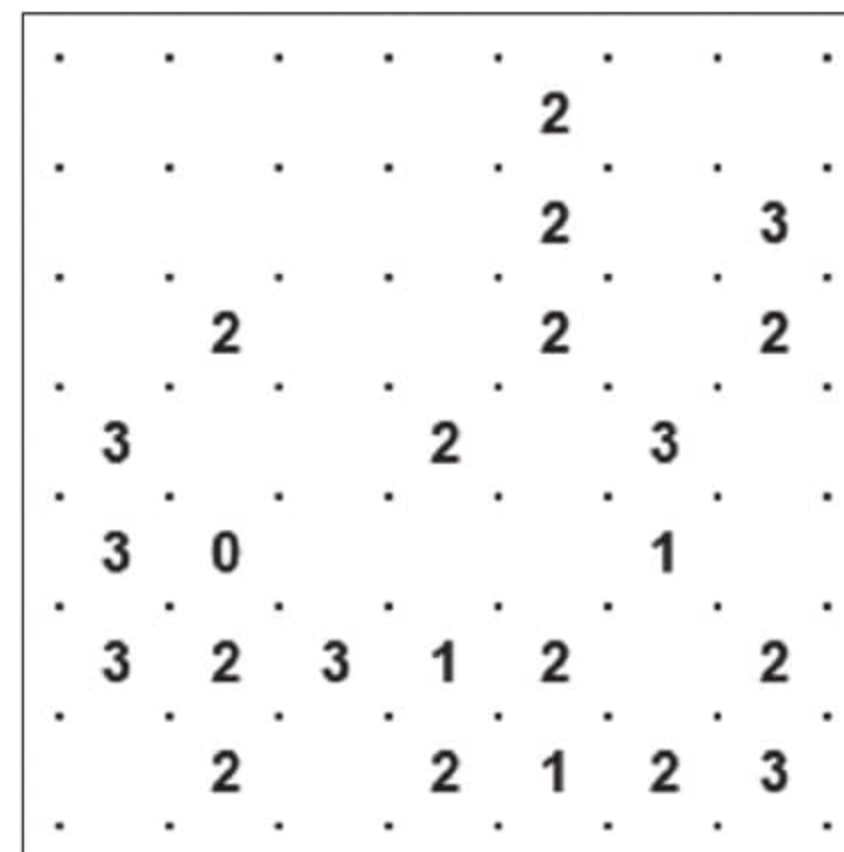
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



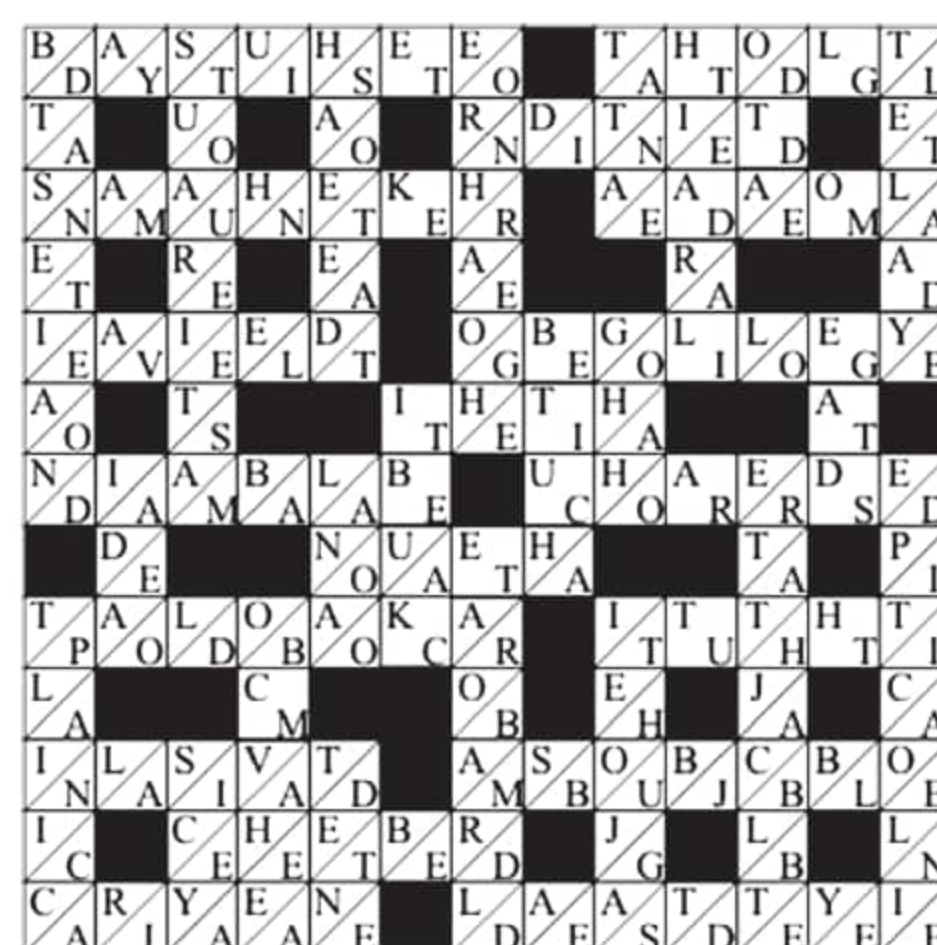
(Fig A)



(Fig B)
Not Allowed



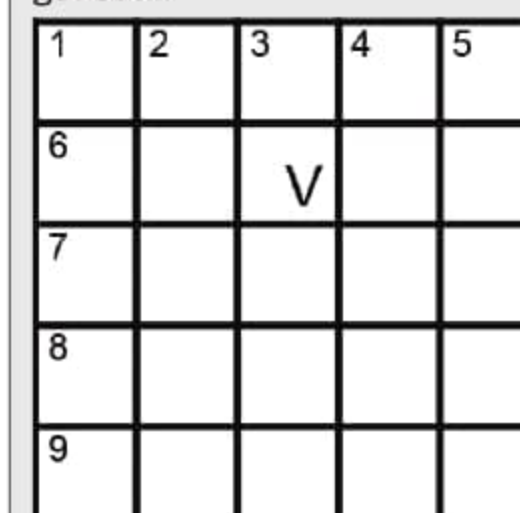
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

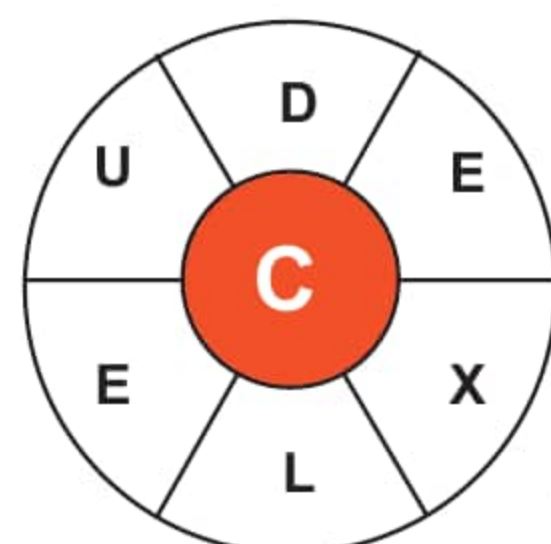
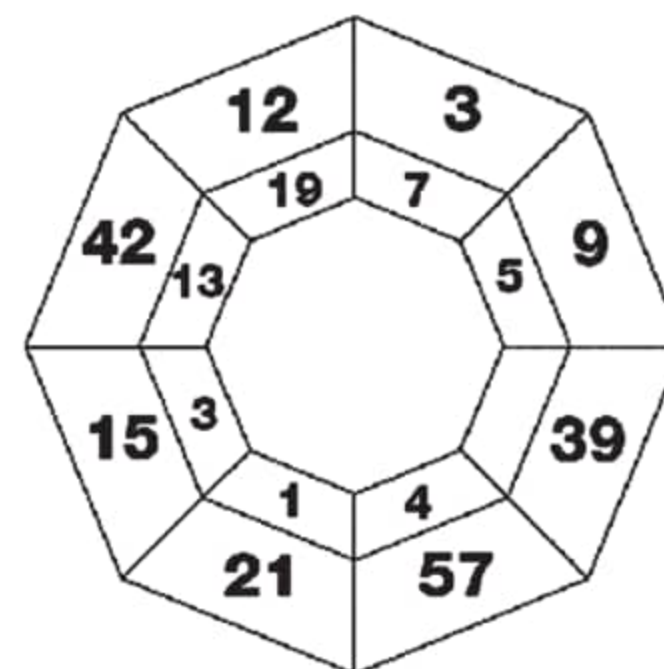
- 1 Morts; 6 A hove;
- 7 Cep ta; 8 Chert;
- 9 Seder

DOWN

- 1 Herds; 2 Repot;
- 3 To ave; 4 CE Rec;
- 5 St ham

Mensapuzzle

Which number goes in the empty segment?



Bull's eye

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

04 Average; 05 Good; 07 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge



To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy

$\square \square \square \square = 12$

$\square \square \square \square = 4$

Medium

$\square \square \square \square = 34$

$\square \square \square \square = 34$

$\square \square \square \square = 34$

$\square \square \square \square = 34$

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Golf club is missing. 2. Fingers are not showing. 3. Paper is added on counter. 4. Tie is thinner. 5. Pamphlet is wider. 6. Mouth is different.

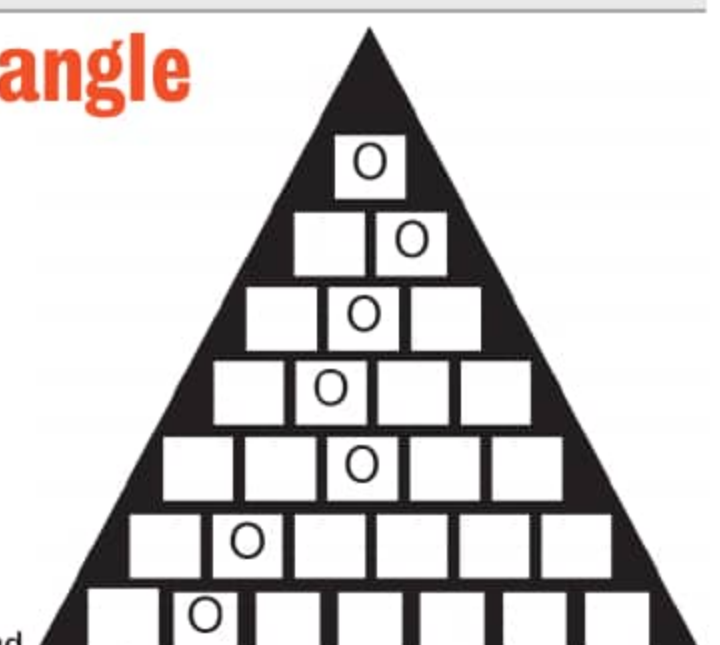
Riddler

This Roman numeral equation is wrong, but you can fix it without changing any of the elements of the equation. How is this possible? I + XI = X

Alpha triangle

- 1 Circular letter
- 2 'Certainly not!'
- 3 Longish span
- 4 Geometric solid
- 5 Hag
- 6 Nook
- 7 Inquest officer

Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be



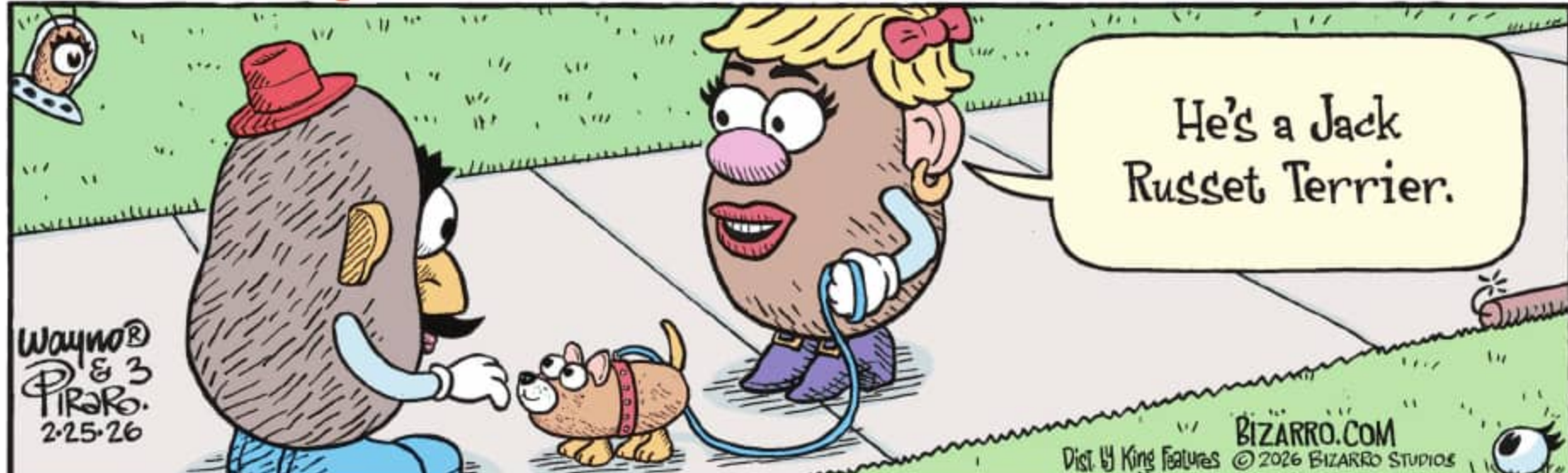
made at each step answering to the clue given.

COMICS

Popeye



Bizarrotrip



Diamond Lil



Hart of the city



Crankshaft



Mutts



WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR



If it's your birthday today

Social invitations flood your calendar, making you the life of every gathering this week. Networking introduces you to a potential business partner who shares your exact vision. Love is playful and filled with laughter, breaking any recent monotony. Be mindful of your digestive health; opting for home-cooked meals will keep you feeling light, vibrant, and focused.

Aries Mar 21 - Apr 20



You value honesty deeply, though today reminds you that not everyone communicates openly. Pay attention to subtle signs and unspoken emotions carefully. Understanding hidden feelings strengthens your relationships and helps conversations flow more smoothly.

Leo Jul 24 - Aug 23



Looking beneath surface appearances today helps you recognize who genuinely supports your wellbeing. While optimism remains valuable, careful observation protects you from misplaced trust. Surround yourself with people whose intentions feel sincere and supportive.

Sagittarius Nov 23 - Dec 22



A certain person may leave you feeling unexpectedly shy and emotionally flustered today. Embrace these sweet feelings confidently instead of overthinking them. Speaking honestly and naturally helps connections blossom in surprisingly wonderful ways ahead.

Taurus Apr 21 - May 20



Seeing happy couples around you may spark temporary envy today, but remember your peace and independence matter greatly too. Avoid forcing romance unnecessarily and appreciate the emotional balance and freedom your current journey provides.

Virgo Aug 24 - Sep 23



Love requires realistic expectations and genuine effort today rather than fantasy scenarios alone. Stepping beyond familiar routines helps you meet meaningful connections naturally. Taking practical action brings you closer to the relationship you truly desire.

Capricorn Dec 23 - Jan 20



Romance arrives unexpectedly today, especially through someone you already admire quietly. Their honest feelings bring excitement and happiness your way. Stay open-hearted and enjoy the moment because this connection holds beautiful emotional potential ahead.

Gemini May 21 - Jun 21



A quieter mood encourages you to spend time alone and recharge peacefully today. Respect your emotional needs without guilt while communicating gently with others. Honest, kind boundaries help maintain harmony and understanding in relationships.

Libra Sep 24 - Oct 22



Positive changes in your romantic life unfold beautifully today, bringing warmth, excitement, and emotional fulfillment. Focus clearly on what your heart truly wants because love energy surrounds you and supports your desires completely now.

Aquarius Jan 21 - Feb 19



You need to recharge, so immediately step outside and connect with the earth. Feel the wind, touch the grass, and practice grounding rituals. Thank Mother Earth for her abundant support. Nature is your best medicine.

Cancer Jun 22 - July 23



Your emotions may fluctuate strongly today, making personal space especially important. Taking time to yourself helps prevent unnecessary tension with loved ones. Rest, reflection, and solitude restore calmness while protecting important relationships beautifully now.

Scorpio Oct 23 - Nov 22



Romantic possibilities feel exciting today, though patience and balance remain essential. Allow relationships to develop naturally without rushing outcomes or overwhelming others. Giving people space strengthens trust, comfort, and deeper emotional understanding over time beautifully.

Pisces Feb 20 - Mar 20



Lingering feelings for someone unavailable finally begin fading peacefully today. Emotional clarity replaces confusion, helping you feel lighter and calmer inside. Releasing unreturned affection opens space for healthier connections and renewed personal happiness ahead.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE



Rahul J,
Bangalore



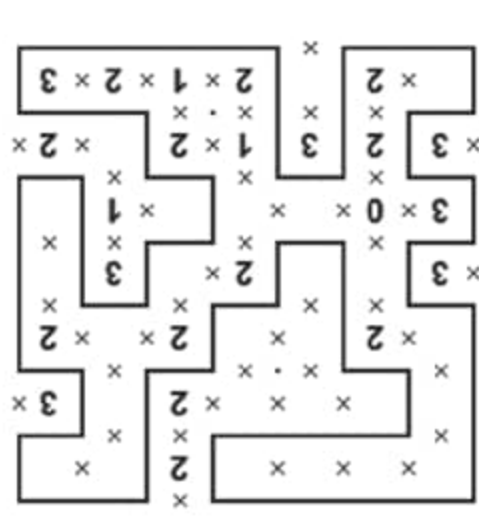
Natania,
Bangalore

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011; Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS



KAKURO



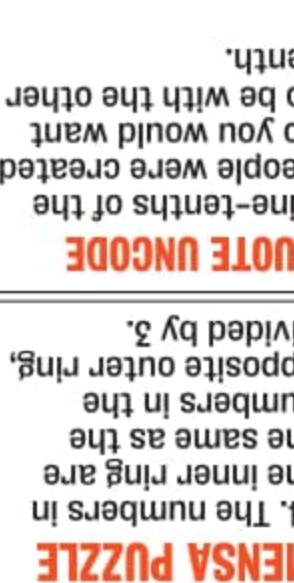
LOOP



ALPHA



SUDOKU



MENSA PUZZLE



QUICK



STRIKE OUT



FAST FIVE



BULLS & COWS



Janhvi in eye of storm

Alleged messages linked to actress about discomfort on unwanted shots during filming create ripples

Fresh discussions around 'Peddi' have once again gained attention online after a series of alleged private messages linked to Janhvi Kapoor began circulating on social media platforms. The screenshots, which remain unverified, surfaced shortly after director Buchi Babu Sana addressed criticism surrounding the film and its portrayal of women, especially Janhvi Kapoor's character, Achiyyamma.

As reported by India Today, according to the alleged exchanges, concerns regarding Janhvi Kapoor's role may have existed before the criticism surrounding the film became widely discussed online.

One of the messages being hared reportedly involved a discussion

about the role parents can play during shoots. Referring to actress Sreeleela, Janhvi allegedly said the actress is often accompanied by her mother while working. She also reportedly suggested the atmosphere may have been different if her father, producer Boney Kapoor, had been present during filming. Janhvi lost her mother, legendary actress Sridevi, in 2018. Another alleged exchange suggested that Janhvi had spoken about difficulties she was experiencing during the process. She wrote, "You have no idea what I've been dealing with. Trying to make them understand (sic)." The alleged conversation also included comments on how certain scenes may be filmed.

Responding to concerns connected to body doubles, Janhvi reportedly said, "Ya I've said this but you know how it is here. They'll say close up and put camera on your cleavage. U can't trust anything (sic)." **-ETimes**



Panchamukhi on June 26



The trailer and soundtrack of Panchamukhi that is scheduled for release on June 26 were unveiled at Renukamba Preview Theater on Thursday. Apart from writing the script, screenplay and dialogues, Chandru Achar has also handled the megaphone and played the protagonist in the movie produced under the SP Productions banner. "This is a horror film, but it will keep audiences hooked for two hours," said Achar.

Spoorthi Manohar plays the female lead in the movie. "The movie went on floors a few years ago, but it took more time to complete shooting and its post-productions works," the director said. He said Panchamukhi is a low-budget movie and it has turned out well. "Most cast and technicians did not receive remuneration. I thank all of them for their cooperation," he said.

Father-son bond

National-award winning director Manoj Kumar is happy about the success of the soundtrack of his latest film Premada Ooralli. The movie's songs talks of a father-son bond.

"We have finished shooting for the movie in and around Hassan, Chikkamagalur, and Moodbidri known for greenery. We released the teaser of the movie recently and it became popular among moviegoers. Around 50,000 reels were made based on the teaser. Now, we have unveiled the song - Avvananth Appanivanu featuring Rangayana Raghu and Sriram. Rangayana Raghu plays the father and Sriram is the son in the movie," said director Manoj Kumar.



The lyrics were penned by Manoj Kumar and Siddharth Sunder has sung the song. Sunaad Gautam has scored its music.

The movie is backed by Mamatha Devendra, Prashanth, and Ramesh under the Venilla Entertainment and Janakamma Production banners.

FREEDOM BENGALURU HALF MARATHON

SHOWS WHY THE CITY LIVES AND BREATHES RUNNING

Advertorial

Every marathon medal tells a story of sacrifice, early mornings and countless kilometres logged long before race day. The Freedom Bengaluru Half Marathon 2026 showcased that spirit in full measure, with over 6,000 runners gathering to celebrate fitness, resilience and community, further cementing Bengaluru's status as India's running capital.

Presented by Freedom Healthy Cooking Oil and promoted by Kalki Sports India, the marathon brought together runners from every age group and profession. Corporate executives, students, homemakers, senior citizens, first-time participants and experienced athletes lined up at the start, united by a common goal. What stood out was the presence of more than 1,500 women runners, highlighting the rapid growth of fitness culture among women in the city.

Years Of Preparation

This commitment was visible throughout the event as runners pushed their limits across the Half Marathon, 10K and 5K categories. The participation of specially-abled runners further underscored the spirit of determination that



defines the city's running community.

The event was graced by Mysuru MP and royal scion Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar, whose presence inspired participants and reinforced the message of healthy living and active lifestyles.

Community Spirit

What makes Bengaluru's running movement unique is that it extends far beyond individual achievement. Every runner is backed by a network of supporters including parents, spouses, children, friends, coaches and training partners. The cheers along the route, the encouragement at water stations and the celebrations at the finish line reflected a city that runs together.

The marathon also generated opportunities for event professionals, pho-



tographers, medical teams, volunteers, hospitality partners, transport providers and local vendors, creating a positive ripple effect across the local economy.

Social media was flooded with race-day photographs, personal milestones and inspiring stories, ensuring that the event's impact continued long after the finish line had been crossed.

Future Forward

Echoing similar sentiments, Kothandapani KC lauded the success of the second edition. "It was my pleasure and honour to flag off the event and present the winners' cheques and trophies across various age categories. The second edition of the Freedom Run by Kalki Sports was a great success. I wish Kalki Sports the very best for future editions," he said.

Words Of Praise

Among those impressed by the event was renowned runner and fitness advocate Barefoot Bobby, who flagged off the races and later felicitated winners. "It was a pleasure to be part of the Freedom Run and to flag off the Half Marathon, 10K and 5K events. It was wonderful cheering and motivating the runners along the route and later presenting the winner plaques. The energy, enthusiasm and spirit of the participants made the event truly memorable," he said. He also praised the organisation of the event, adding that participants had spoken highly of the race management, finisher medals and post-race arrangements.

As thousands crossed the finish line carrying medals, memories and personal victories, the Freedom Bengaluru Half Marathon demonstrated why Bengaluru occupies a special place on India's running map. In a city where running clubs thrive, weekend races fill up months in advance and fitness has become a way of life, the marathon was a reminder that success is not built overnight.